

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Recommending the Yucca Mountain
Site for the Disposal of Spent
Nuclear Fuel and Nuclear Waste**

February 15, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 114 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, 42 U.S.C. 10134 (the "Act"), the Secretary of Energy has recommended approval of the Yucca Mountain site for the development at that site of a repository for the geologic disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high level nuclear waste from the Nation's defense activities. As is required by the Act, the Secretary has also submitted to me a comprehensive statement of the basis of his recommendation.

Having received the Secretary's recommendation and the comprehensive statement of the basis of it, I consider the Yucca Mountain site qualified for application for a construction authorization for a repository. Therefore, I now recommend the Yucca Mountain site for this purpose. In accordance with section 114 of the Act, I am transmitting with this recommendation to the Congress a copy of the comprehensive statement of the basis of the Secretary's recommendation prepared pursuant to the Act. The transmission of this document triggers an expedited process described in the Act. I urge the Congress to undertake any necessary legislative action on this recommendation in an expedited and bipartisan fashion.

Proceeding with the repository program is necessary to protect public safety, health, and the Nation's security because successful completion of this project would isolate in a geologic repository at a remote location highly radioactive materials now scattered throughout the Nation. In addition, the geologic repository would support our national security through disposal of nuclear waste from our defense facilities.

A deep geologic repository, such as Yucca Mountain, is important for our national security and our energy future. Nuclear energy is the second largest source of U.S. electricity generation and must remain a major component of our national energy policy in the years to come. The cost of nuclear power compares favorably with the costs of elec-

tricity generation by other sources, and nuclear power has none of the emissions associated with coal and gas power plants.

This recommendation, if it becomes effective, will permit commencement of the next rigorous stage of scientific and technical review of the repository program through formal licensing proceedings before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Successful completion of this program also will redeem the clear Federal legal obligation safely to dispose of commercial spent nuclear fuel that the Congress passed in 1982.

This recommendation is the culmination of two decades of intense scientific scrutiny involving application of an array of scientific and technical disciplines necessary and appropriate for this challenging undertaking. It is an undertaking that was mandated twice by the Congress when it legislated the obligations that would be redeemed by successful pursuit of the repository program. Allowing this recommendation to come into effect will enable the beginning of the next phase of intense scrutiny of the project necessary to assure the public health, safety, and security in the area of Yucca Mountain, and also to enhance the safety and security of the Nation as a whole.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

**Digest of Other
White House Announcements**

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

February 10

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush returned from Jackson Hole, WY, to Washington, DC.

February 11

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen to discuss cooperation against terrorism. Later, he had intelligence briefings.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Milwaukee, WI, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

February 12

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to discuss the situation in the Middle East. Later, he had CIA, FBI, and homeland security briefings, and met with the National Security Council.

In the afternoon, the President received the annual report of the Boy Scouts of America in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate Tony P. Hall to be U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced that Ron Haskins has joined the White House on a temporary and part-time basis as Senior Advisor for Welfare Policy.

February 13

In the morning, the President had CIA and FBI briefings and then met with the National Security Council.

In the afternoon, the President met with United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

February 14

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary to express his appreciation for Hungary's efforts to combat terrorism. He also had a telephone conversation with President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, in his capacity as President of the European Union, concerning global climate change.

Later in the morning, the President had intelligence briefings.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Silver Spring, MD, and later returned to Washington, DC.

Later in the afternoon, in a ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Molelekeng Rapolaki of Lesotho, Tertius Zongo of Burkina Faso, Armando A. Panguene of Mozambique, John Wood of New Zealand, Syed Hasan Ahmad of Bangladesh, Jai Pratap Rana of Nepal, Elena Poptodorova of Bulgaria, Soemadi Djoko Moerdjono Brotodiningrat of Indonesia, and Diego Ramiro Guelar of Argentina.

In the evening, in the East Room, the President participated in the filming of a television production honoring gospel music, for future broadcast on the PAX network.

The President announced his intention to appoint John LeRoy Henderson as a member of the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

February 15

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines concerning cooperation against terrorism. Later, he had intelligence briefings and met with the National Security Council. He then met with President Jorge Batlle of Uruguay in the Oval Office.

The White House announced that, in the morning, the White House was reopened to tours for school groups.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeremy H.G. Ibrahim and David B. Rivkin, Jr., to be members of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States.

The President announced his intention to nominate the following individuals to be members of the National Council on the Arts: Maribeth McGinley, David Gelernter, Deedie Potter Rose, Don V. Cogman, Katharine DeWitt, and Teresa Lozano Long.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations